

TOP SECRET/CODEWORD

May 16, 1973
(Neaheer/Saunders)

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PRESIDENT'S WEDNESDAY BRIEFING

For the President

Inter-Arab Military Movements: In recent weeks, Egypt and other Arab states have reinforced their talk of renewed war with Israel with military movements. These movements have included:

State Dept. review completed

--Transfer of over fifty aircraft to Egypt--from Libya (Mirages), Iraq and possibly Saudi Arabia.

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

--Algerian transfer of aircraft to Libya and reports of an Algerian promise to transfer aircraft also to Syria.

--Moroccan commitment to station some Moroccan troops in Syria.

--Related training on new equipment, especially in Egypt and Syria, and an upgrading in the alert status of their armed forces.

The current assessment of these moves is as follows:

1. They do not threaten Israel's superiority, an opinion which the Israelis share. At a minimum, however, CIA believes they could make it more difficult for Israel to prevent some air attacks, particularly if Egypt and Syria were to launch a coordinated attack.
2. There is inconclusive evidence on the issue of whether President Sadat has decided to resume hostilities. The latest official Israeli estimate is that the probability is low and that his maneuvers are to support his and the Arab political position. Israeli defense officials are concerned about the Syrian military build-up, but they presently do not believe Syria would independently initiate hostilities with Israel.

Sources: CIB Weekly Review, 5/11/73, pgs. 1 and 3
CIA/White House Supp 10596, 150401Z May 73